TOWN & OUNTRY HURCH

The Responsibility of the Town and Country Church for the Rural Community

ROSS W. SANDERSON

• As far as the church is concerned, the problem in our time has become chiefly an administrative one. We know what needs to be done. Are we going to do it? We can state the problem with reasonable adequacy. What are we going to do about it? What we chiefly need now is more vigorous Protestant rural action.

Dr. Hermann N. Morse of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. stated the problem when he said: "Our habit of not identifying churches with the community as a whole, but only with selective elements in it makes the church unwittingly a participant in group conflict rather than a solvent of it. It also shatters the continuity of our religious appeal in every changing community and at the same time makes community integration difficult." And one of the foremost ecclesiastical statesmen in American Protestantism has declared, "Protestantism is the most divisive force in the local community."

The Spiritual Need

It makes a difference whether you talk about a *community* church or whether you talk about a community *church*. As T. N. Carver said forty years ago, "Upon the character of the population more than upon anything else depends the political, social, economic and ecclesiastical outlook." The church is socially conditioned, but it is divinely commissioned. It is part of a supernatural community that runs "forward through the ages." We have sociological needs and ecclesiastical needs, but the community's deepest need is spiritual.

We have made progress, but not enough; and the indictments I have just quoted are still substantially true. Witness one church for every 470 rural people in Iowa. Witness six churches and no resident minister in a single township in Missouri, competing for the loyalty of groups that average 119 people.

The ecclesiastical mind must be willing to adjust itself to community reality. Church overheads are not an end in themselves, for which individual Christians were made; denominations exist for people, not people for denominations. What is important is not so much what is happening to the churches as what is happening to the people outside the church. Indifference to them pushes them farther away. Neglect a family five miles from town long enough, and it might as well be ten miles from town.

Helpless Churches

There is abundant evidence that little churches, like little nations, are strangely helpless. Unless they act together, they are undone.

Finding the will of God may not prove too easy for open-minded people. If we are docile, we shall be taken unawares, as were the German people. If we are freemen we shall not be too easily convinced. Not everybody claiming to know God's will actually knows it. It is my contention that minds that are not open toward one another are less likely to be open to the mind of God.

There are continuing threats of totalitarianism. One of these is military and political. Another is economic. With these I am not at the moment concerned. These dangers are obvious. Are we as alert to avoid ecclesiastical totalitarianism? Against this danger there is only one defense: an adequate democratic equivalent in terms of cooperation among free churches. This is an age of necessary togetherness. If we do not stay together, we shall cease to be.

Cooperation Among Free Churches

The responsible church will know its community: the people in it, their origin, their groupings, their likes and dislikes. This is a minimum responsibility, but how few there are that live up to it. However, while conditioned by community conditions as are other social institutions, the church is not merely a social in-

At the San Jose Convocation

The National Convocation on the urch in Town and Country was d at San Jose, California, Novem- 9-11, 1948. Almost three hundred sons registered and many more ended.

Those who attended the Convoca- n all testify to the effect that a co- erative spirit was evident through- the entire session. Those who at- ded worked intensively side by e in commissions which are re- ted in this issue.

The Convocation is an informal embly of individuals, held under auspices of the Committee on wn and Country which represents Home Missions Council of North erica, the Federal Council of the urches of Christ in America, and International Council of Reli- us Education.

The first session of the Convoca- n was held in 1943 at Columbus, io.

The Convocation invites those st concerned with the rural urch to come together once a year. ese persons worship together, edu- e one another, and formulate find- s and recommendations.

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stitution. The number and kind of people in the community, employment conditions, physical and social topography, health, the age and character of the culture—these and many other matters affect the church. Yet the church is a divine instrument for the redemption of society. Its business is to transform, not to conform.

So far we have proceeded on the thesis that we know what to do better than we do it. It is quite as true that we don't know enough. We have made beginnings—in books, pamphlets and periodicals; but the sum of it is hardly a drop in the bucket. We must have more vigorous united publicizing of our successes for the sake of developing new patterns of church and community relationships. We must make more intensive, more extensive, more penetrating analyses of our failures. The widespread use of the empirical as against the doctrinaire approach may convince us that some of our rules-of-thumb have been formulated too soon, and that the application even of a sound rule may require intimate and adequate knowledge of more facts than some of us have realized. Those who know the most about rural American churches and communities are most aware of the inadequacy of this knowledge.

Ecumenical Logistics

Logistics is the military science by which the right material is at the right place at the right time to equip the right amount of personnel. Ecumenical logistics is a necessity if America is to be adequately churched and our population is to be served by an adequate ministry.

The time has come when the town and country church movement in America should have a full-time administrative chief of staff, interdenominationally employed. He should be primarily an administrator. He should know field research, he should know educational procedures; but first and foremost his task should be to see to it that things happen.

Councils of churches should employ interdenominational rural church executives. The alternative is the slow erosion of thousands of churches, the gradual atrophy of historical parishes, the growth of an ecclesiastical dustbowl.

We need a Protestant strategy for Rural America. The alternative is that decreasing rural populations will have declining religious institutions. Membership tends to drop even faster than population shrinks. Because people are fewer, and the population is sparser, they tend to be poorer spiritually—especially if we have no strategy to meet their condition.

Trained Men and Women

We must enlist and train and place better men and women. (Note that I do not say more men and women. They might even be fewer.) We must put behind them the resources of the whole church. We must free them, as some have already been freed, from the whims of small local leaders.

We have too often paid the best salaries to the men with the easiest jobs. Few have realized that even in young America there is a death-rate as well as a birth-rate among churches. The data show that the proportion of churches whose pastors have a very short tenure is greatest in centers with fewer than 500 people. In one denomination in one state 92 per cent of the churches with less than twenty-five members have been decreasing during the last two decades.

Rebuilding Protestant Culture

The end-product of ecclesiastical erosion is futile and anemic monopoly. Given a marginal community, the church is likely to be even more marginal. Its pastor is ill-trained, decrepit, non-resident more often than not. The institution that should be a center of health is itself dragged down by the illness of the community.

Our task is nothing less than to rebuild the Protestant rural culture of America. Out of it has come much of its best blood, to the tune of millions of people. As the hillsides are denuded, so is our rural church culture eroded. Unless we keep clean the wellsprings of urban Protestantism, our great city churches will die through failure to reproduce themselves.

Outstanding Needs of Rural Parishes

• One of the features of the Convocation was a panel discussion on the subject, "Outstanding Needs of Rural Parishes." The participants were Correll M. Julian, Pacific School of Religion; Laing Sibbet, San Francisco Theological Seminary; Maxwell T. Powers, Berkeley Baptist Divinity School; and Sumner F. Walters, Episcopal Bishop of the San Joaquin District.

Among many matters mentioned were that the rural church needs expert advice on its building projects; it needs to take a religious census every five years in order to increase membership.

It needs a definite program for recruitment of ministers from among the students of agricultural colleges, high schools and universities. It needs a Christian program for leisure time. It needs a more unified church program.

How Did the Convocation Start?

• The Convocation was begun in 1943 because of the conviction of the Committee on Town and Country that there should be a regularly held gathering. National conferences had been held before under church auspices, in 1916 and in 1936. It was felt that there must be a continuous process. The decision to inaugurate the convocation, and the paper *Town and Country Church,* was considerably hastened by expressions of opinion as to their need on the part of prominent laymen in the churches.

Devotions at the Convocation

• Worship services of the Convocation were conducted by Benjamin H. Cain, Evangelical United Brethren Church. At the worship services, use was made of the new hymnal *Hymns of the Rural Spirit.* If your church is not using *Hymns of the Rural Spirit,* write to the Commission on Worship, Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., sending 35c for a single copy.

Forces in Rural Life of Concern to Rural Churchmen

PAUL H. LANDIS

Back of the prestige of the minister as a symbol of the right way of life is the organized church, which is one of the great symbols of social regulation. I do not wish to imply that the role of the minister as a person, and of the church as a social institution, is strictly that of social control. From the standpoint of the sociologist, this role does constitute one of the principal social functions of the minister and of the church.

The forces of social control may be classified as internal and external, the internal forces being those which operate in the realm of motives; the external those which operate as pressures from the outside. Both kinds of forces may be powerful in their time and place.

It may be stated as axiomatic that the effectiveness of social control in any community is determined in considerable part by the extent to which its residents are bound to a locality. Those who remain in the same abode for a lifetime become deeply anchored in the traditions of their ancestors.

Mobility A Major Force

In rural America, one must list mobility as the major force in shifting patterns of social control during this century. Mobility on an extensive scale in rural America is a product of the automobile age. Most of it has come since World War I.

In times of depression Americans move to find work and to escape the noresome frustration of idleness and local disgrace; in times of prosperity they move to take advantage of opportunity which looms large in the distance.

Much of the migration described is that of youth, although no age group is immune. Much of it is a movement of rural youth, for rural America has produced children far out of proportion to its ratio in the total population.

The effective patterns of social control built about locality a generation ago have lost much of their meaning to youth in this age. The external restraints of parents, kinfolks and neighbors have lessened immensely. Those who are anchored in a community for a lifetime, by and large, are probably more serious and more devoted in their church duties than those who move frequently.

The sacredness of marriage bonds and their durability is closely correlated with the mobility of the occupational class. Those occupational classes which evade the pressures of the community because they move frequently show high divorce rates. Those occupational groups which are anchored in the community and, therefore, are under the surveillance of the local group, have relatively low divorce rates.

Shift in Attitudes

The second major force in weakening social control is the shift in attitudes toward authority. One scarcely ever hears preached today the doctrine that children should honor and obey their parents, an unquestioned gospel principle of two or three generations ago in pulpit and in rural community. Rural youth have become emancipated to a remarkable degree from the authoritarian family pattern.

The pattern of family authority and of child training in the so-called individualistic family is emerging in western industrial civilization. It takes the form, not of authoritarian patterns, but of guidance and direction.

The essential weakness of authoritarian patterns of family control is the same as that which characterizes an authoritarian religious control. It works well as long as the person is submerged in that pattern, but does not permit growing up and, therefore, does not permit ready adjustment of youth to the demands of modern society.

Grant the young person the privilege of climbing the educational ladder, of contacting groups outside the immediate religious order, and he finds himself faced with the alternative of going back to the old group, or of deliberately choosing a broader way which comes to seem more

George Wilson, Clarksburg, Calif., farm leader, is discussing national agricultural policy. Next to him, with a pipe, is Tom Tripp, Congregational Christian Churches, in as relaxed a state as usual.

—Courtesy of Town and Country Department, Iliff School of Theology

reasonable and more attractive to him as a person. A religion based on guidance and training, rather than authoritarian patterns, leaves room for a lifetime of growth.

Finally, let us consider education as a factor in changing attitudes toward authority and in developing a secular frame of mind in youth. In states where as many as ninety per cent of young people go to high school, and there are a few such states, the trend towards emancipation of youth from authoritarian patterns of control is far advanced. In states where only half of youth go to high school, authoritarian patterns still have a strong hold.

Go back fifty years and in many farm communities the child was kept out of school by parents during the busy work season. Few do it today. If they persist in it, there is the law to reckon with. The length of school terms in the rural community, even that of the local one-room school, has been extended, so that in most states it now equals that of town and city. Even the extra-curricular demands and the home study demands of the school are beginning to pry the parent loose from his old notions of the priority of his work demands over school interest.

We shall consider three problems that have emerged:

Emancipation of Youth

First, the gradual emancipation of rural youth creates for them unusual difficulties of personal adjustment. By and large, farm youth still grow up under a more authoritarian pattern of family training than do other young people. They have less opportunity to develop a self-sufficient, individualistic personality, and are less prepared for the transition to adulthood than are urban youth.

Second, emancipation of farm youth from the authoritarian pattern of religion and of family philosophy is already making itself felt in the low farm birth-rate. The farm birth-rate has for three decades been falling more rapidly than the urban birth-rate. It still remains higher than the urban birth-rate, but in sections of the country where high school education is universal, we can expect that a family pattern little larger than that of the urban family will eventually be realized. This probably will mean a decline in the national birth-rate. It certainly is a threat to the future of rural social institutions as such.

Neighborhood Institutions

Should the two to three child family become the pattern of the farm, as it has of town and city, the problem of maintaining neighborhood institutions will become even more critical. I am not sure that many of them should be maintained. In a day of horse and buggy travel, the local one-room school and the country church met a real need of the farm population. The need can be better met today by the consolidated school and the community church of town and city. We should, therefore, perhaps be less concerned in the future with saving these archaic institutions and more concerned with recognizing population and mobility trends.

The Secular World

Third, an immediate and inescapable effect of the secularization of attitudes of rural people, particularly of rural youth, has been that the church has become one of the secondary, rather than of the primary, social institutions of the rural community. It must yield priority in time, attention, and devotion to other institutions which have come to play the primary role. It has lost its welfare function and much of its control over the family and marriage to civil authority. But the most significant transition has come in the shifting of the first loyalties of the people of the community from the church to the school.

The school has prior demands on the activities and interests of the community. It is almost useless for the church to try to compete even with the extra-curricular activities of the school. The church, therefore, has had to modify its program step by step to give place to other institutions which have come to hold a higher place in the estimation of the community. I do not mean a higher place from the standpoint of moral values, but from the standpoint of meeting what are considered by the group to be its basic needs.

Urban Values

Finally, the new trend toward greater mobility and more complete secularization orients psychological values about urban rather than rural values. The motivations of farm youth today are therefore different from those of their parents. Basic rural values traditionally have focused about work, land and family. The farm community has been work centered, land centered and family centered. Urban life is, by contrast, leisure centered, consumption centered and individual rather than family centered.

It is in the very nature of things that farm youth will absorb these values in the urban-oriented school system of which they have become a part. The church faces the particular challenge of seeing that the guiding and regulative force of religion is kept alive in them after they have shed the protective controls of their rural locality.

Forum at the Convocation

• One of the general sessions at this Convocation was organized as a public forum on the theme of "The 160-Acre Water Limitation of the Federal Reclamation Law—What are the social and ethical aspects? Why should the churches be interested?" Paul S. Taylor, University of California, defended the present provisions of the law. Professor Taylor said that the law is "bone and sinew" of American history. It has been in effect for forty-five years for the purpose of preventing monopoly of the waters of the west.

George H. Wilson, Clarksburg, California, a leader in the American Farm Bureau Federation, argued for elimination of the present provisions. He said that there were many violations of the law because in his opinion it is "inoperable." He alleged that the limitation made for a low standard of living and for encouragement of a type of American peasantry.

Those attending the Convocation and those who address it speak for themselves and not for the Committee on Town and Country or the agencies to which it is responsible.

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Religious Education in the Town and Country Church

JOHN B. KETCHAM

• Our most rugged moral and spiritual leadership has come from rural America. Six presidents of the United States were born in log cabins, five others were sons of farmers. Three were sons of artisans, three were children of country parsons. A recent poll made by Edwin Hunter indicated that fifty-three Senators, all but one member of the Supreme Court, and thirty-five governors were born in communities of less than 2,500.

Sources of Life

The vital end of the sources of life are our small communities. They are the foundation of democratic living, the seed bed of our population, the source of our membership in the urban church. Therefore, the type of leadership we have in both church and state tomorrow depends on the effectiveness of our religious education program in the rural church.

Community A Teacher

The community is a powerful and constant teacher which cannot be ignored. The community may provide intolerable handicaps for the churches and the forces of Christian education. Here lies our deadline Christian education problem—how can we work out a positive program which will further counteract or redirect this community influence to make it more useful in forming character? As rural religious educators, we are to see to it that the community is made an influence for desirable character growth in boys and girls, and in adults as well.

We must attack our teaching job on two fronts at the same time. First, we must have a vital program of education for the individual. For this, we have a theology of redemption in terms of the individual to which the church has given years of thought, produced extensive literature and trained thousands of leaders. On the second front the Church must have an equally vital program by which Christian education modifies, redirects and rebuilds these community forces which continually modify human behavior.

Imperatives

If we are to make any real progress in meeting our deadline on this two-front war, these four things are imperative:

1. We must recognize the power and significance of the community in relationship to what people become.
2. The church must view its mission in terms which necessitate the modification and transformation of community living if the objective of Christian teaching is to be realized.
3. More cooperative effort and planning among the various Protestant forces of Christian education within local communities is needed. Rural community cooperation is a requirement, not an option, in Christian education if negative character building forces are to be successfully challenged.
4. A strategy must be devised by which rural Christian education on a cooperative basis will join hands with other constructive rural community agencies —school, lodge, grange, children, youth and adult programs—in the community life to seek community change.

A New Emphasis

There is a new emphasis in Christian education that promises to be revolutionary. It holds that our educational programs must frankly face the fact that the family is the greatest educational influence in the religious shaping of life. Nowhere else may religion be taught so easily and with such abiding results as in the home. Parents teach religion by what they say and do and are. Learning constantly takes place in the family circle.

The home is still the most influen-

tial teacher but its teaching is too seldom definitely and effectively Christian. In all too many cases today, the home has virtually abdicated as a purposeful Christian teacher. Most of the responsibility has been shifted to the Church. But the Sunday School was never intended to supersede the home as a teacher of religion. It can only supplement the influence of the Christian home. Christian parents must become the chief teachers of religion, but Christian nurture by its very nature is a shared task of home and church.

Devoted Volunteers

In religious education, our teaching ministry depends chiefly on the services of devoted men and women volunteers. Effectiveness in Christian teaching depends on the teacher's warm personal experience of the indwelling Christ and an awareness of the Christian faith and all it means for life. The teacher's effectiveness grows through an understanding of human nature, how learning takes place, and a mastery of the techniques required for the communication of truth and the demonstration of that truth in daily living.

To deepen the teacher's spiritual life and help him develop skill in teaching ought to be our basic aim. But how can we realize this aim in the small church? Guided reading, coaching by the pastor, denominational correspondence courses in leadership training, and churches cooperating in leadership schools is one answer. The establishing of neighborhood groups to discuss pertinent social, economic and world problems and taking a leaf from the Home Bureau process of coaching a person to lead such groups is another answer.

Strategies in Training

There are certain important strategies in training that the rural church ought to use to greater extent. Key leaders should be sent to laboratory training schools. We ought to have one such school in every state, moving to a different rural community each year.

We ought to explore the possibility of sharing a full-time, well-trained religious education worker among several rural communities. Her chief emphasis would have to be on training leaders for Sunday schools, weekday religious education, vacation church schools, youth work, women's work. She would act as counselor to each church school in selecting its curriculum materials, improving its teaching methods, making worship central and significant, planning its community services, and setting up its recreation and social program.

The process of building and creating lay leaders for the teaching ministry is the key to rural church improvement.

Roy Sturm, the Methodist Church, leads the commission considering church cooperation with community agencies.

—Courtesy of Town and Country Department, Iliff School of Theology

The Commissions of the Convocation

• Each of the sixteen commissions of the Convocation consisted of an interested group of people who met for the purpose of formulating recommendations as to future program emphases for the rural church—national, state and local, especially local.

The digests of the commission reports, as published in this issue, were taken from summaries furnished by chairmen or secretaries of commissions or both, or persons named by them. The names appearing after the commission reports are those who, we understand, were mainly responsible for either the commission program or for the report furnished to us.

Who Follows Up the Convocation?

• The ideas and specific plans considered are implemented in numerous ways and channels. The persons who took part in the San Jose meeting are the first and foremost line of implementation. These men and women live in rural communities. They are pastors and lay people in local churches. They are administrators of numerous denominational and interdenominational agencies. They are teachers and writers, and students in colleges and seminaries.

The local and state councils of churches have special responsibilities for furthering the cooperative aspects of the Convocation's ideas and plans. There is an extensive follow-up through the religious press and news services. The daily press calls attention to Convocation highlights.

Nationally, a responsibility for follow-up rests upon the various rural church departments of the constituent denominations, and also their agencies of religious education. The Committee on Town and Country is the national clearing house for interdenominational programs, and it has responsibility for those aspects of the Convocation's recommendations requiring national collaboration among the religious bodies.

Issues of *Town and Country Church* are, we hope, influential in implementation.

Significant Women's Programs in Town and Country Churches

MARJORIE MINKLER

Rural women often make great sacces in order to give the amount of ie that they do to the work of the urch. Vacation church schools alys come at a busy season. I have own of women getting up long be- e daylight in order to get work at me done before going to teach in cation school, and afterwards stay- ; up late at night to can vegetables fruit.

Rural women also help to finance e church. They give church sup- rs; make quilts to sell; hold ba- urs; have rummage sales; save pen- s, nickels, and dimes for the urch; give generously from butter d egg money.

Women are serving on official ards and even as ministers. In fact ere are few places of leadership in e church which have not been ed by women.

e Second Mile

Christian women, however, have t been content with working with- the framework of a local church ganization. They have felt the urge go "the second mile." Seeing the eds of their local communities they ve felt compelled to help the urch in meeting these needs. They ve become concerned with the eas where there is injustice, lack of portunity and poverty. They have ught a vision of ways in which the urch may reach out to aid in build- g a world of brotherhood.

In some areas where distances are eat or transportation lacking, it is fficult for rural women to meet to- ther, but with the constant im- ovement of roads and travel facili- s it has become much easier than has been in the past. In preparing ogram plans, national women's or- nizations have tried to take into nsideration the problems women ce.

omen's Own Programs

Some women's organizations have repared material especially suitable for rural groups but most of them have felt that all church women should be informed about the problems of people in every situation and, rather than preparing special materials for rural societies, have made suggestions for adapting the materials according to the desires and needs of the group.

Organizations of women of town and country churches which in the past concentrated upon raising funds to pay the minister's salary, keeping the parsonage repaired and furnished, visiting the sick and the shut-ins, have in most cases enlarged their conception of community service to include such services as the promotion of Christian family life, the development of wholesome recreational opportunities, the establishment of hot school lunch programs, the building of better roads, the development of health services, the provision of rural library service, the promotion of farmers' curb markets, and the improvement of local government.

Studying World Problems

Organized women of the rural church are studying about the world problems, discovering world needs, and getting acquainted with world peoples. They are giving time and money toward the building of a better world.

Women are also providing for the training of young women for missionary service at home and abroad. Organizations of church women are supporting the work of these young people when their preparation has been completed. Both in this country and in other lands many of these trained women are serving in rural areas, helping to develop leadership in rural churches and communities. More and more, churches are realizing the importance of rural people.

Workers Are Sent

Women workers are being sent into rapidly growing industrial towns where churches and social organizations have been unable to keep pace with developments of industry; into mining camps in which people for the first time are being permitted to buy their own homes and are beginning to develop civic pride; to serve Indian populations who are moving away from reservations as well as those who are remaining on reservations and eking out a living as best they can; into areas in which people are living in houseboats supporting themselves by trapping and fishing with no permanent home and little security; into small towns in which there are many non-English speaking people who need help in understanding our language and customs; into rural communities in which there are inadequate health facilities, public schools, churches, and recreational opportunities; into agricultural sections where tenant farm families and farm laborers need assistance in finding homes and ways in which to earn a living as they are being replaced by mechanical labor on the farm.

Larger Parishes

Young women are being sent to assist in larger parish programs, group ministry plans, and other organizational patterns designed to cooperatively serve rural areas so that the needs of individuals, families, and communities may be met.

Church women's organizations are also helping to support the work which the Home Missions Council is doing in town and country, such as migrant work, work with Indians in government schools, and the work which is done by the Town and Country Committee through research, the holding of conferences to plan together for meeting special problems of rural areas and the promoting of church unity.

Challenging Young People

The importance of challenging young people for service and helping them to understand rural problems is a part of the task which women are undertaking in planning for the future. Work camps, youth caravans, fellowship teams and other forms of short term service give young people

a taste of what it means to give one's life in Christian service.

Just as there has been a shortage of capable ministers in rural areas in recent years, there has also been a shortage of young women trained for Christian service. We need leaders with ability, with courage, with vision and with professional training who can go into isolated communities and help the people to see how they may become a part of a larger world; who can go into overorganized communities and assist in coordinating the efforts of groups; who, in sparsely populated areas, can help the people achieve a sense of community; who can develop native leadership through which people of small communities may be led out of the wilderness of distrust, discouragement and insecurity and into a community of cooperation, mutual understanding, confidence and hope.

The Registration at the Convocation

1.	Methodist	122
2.	Baptist	47
3.	Presbyterian U.S. and U.S.A.	25
4.	Episcopal	24
5.	Evangelical United Brethren	14
6.	Congregational-Christian	13
7.	Disciples	10
8.	Church of God	7
9.	Evangelical and Reformed	5
10.	Not designated and all others	21
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The Church and Agricultural Policy

From the Commission Report

• While there are basic factors of concern in policy, there are certain forces which fluctuate radically, and many which come into clearer focus or may disappear entirely according to conditions in society generally or according to certain peculiar aspects of a particular geographical area.

From this standpoint the Commission accepted the following topics as being of chief interest:

(1) The effects of price supports on the total cost of living; (2) The effects of foreign trade in agricultural products on the cost of living; (3) The implications of the 160-acre water limitation on the back-to-the-farm movement especially in the Central Valley project in California;

(*Continued on Page* 10)

The Transformation of Communities Through Church Cooperation

ELLIOTT L. FISHER

• It has been estimated that more than eight million rural young people under twenty-one years of age have no contact with the Church, either Protestant, Catholic or Jewish.

Therefore, from the rural standpoint, we are vitally concerned with the recent statement made by one of America's foremost citizens, J. Edgar Hoover of the F.B.I., to the effect that "Crime in rural areas increased 14.1 per cent in contrast to a 7.4 per cent in urban communities." Is there not some connection between the report of the F.B.I. and the closed doors of churches in rural areas—the inadequacy of programs for youth—the competing community organizations?

Church Initiative

We must take the initiative as a church in every community to the end that the church, along with all the agencies of the community concerned with youth, may plan wisely and cooperatively.

Through cooperation, communities can be transformed and Christian character developed. Let us lift up the challenge of Christian service in our local churches by making them effective instruments of service.

Then let us not forget the obligation we owe to those of our youth who, having made their decision for service, leave our communities for further education. The founders of the land-grant colleges believed that hundreds of country boys and girls would return to their homes and lift their communities to higher levels of living. But the truth is that not more than one in ten college students, according to Dr. Arthur Morgan, return to the small community whence they come.

Rural Training

In the denomination I serve, we are now trying to meet the crucial need of education by the establishment of a Department of Rural Life Education in the church-related colleges, with the purpose of working with these rural young people and then sending them back to their communities to build a fuller, happier, richer life and to discover new sources of power and opportunity for service out in the countryside.

This rural training program has a three-fold purpose: supplying classroom training; providing experience in church leadership; and developing a sense of cooperation with other community groups and agencies. Such groups will go far in training rural youth for effective service and directing them back to the countryside from which they came.

Adequate Programs

We stand desperately in need of preachers and laymen who will dare to commit themselves to the ideal set forth by the Home Missions Council, "One church with an adequate community program, a resident pastor conducting worship every Sunday, providing a challenging program for youth, receiving into Christian fellowship all varieties of evangelical Christians for each thousand of population."

Comity agreements and exchange of fields, both in old and new fields of service, may be the way that calls for a greater sacrifice upon the part of people and of denominations, but in the long run they will pay the biggest dividends in terms of a more effective and a more dynamic ministry.

Decentralization of industry is going on apace throughout the nation. The rapid growth of villages and towns on the west coast, particularly, has been miraculous. Projects such as the Columbia River Basin, the Central Valley and the Missouri River Valley will continue to play a major part in the increase of western population in the days ahead.

Restudy of Fields

What all of this will mean in new communities, in the development of

ndustry throughout the area, one an readily understand.

We must not only provide for hese new areas of service but should estudy the fields we are now serving nd in them rebuild and relocate our hurches and make our ministry to he total community effective.

The church which will be the most ffective in any community is the hurch that has learned to develop within its own gates a spirit of helpulness and fellowship and from whose pulpit radiates the contagion of a religion that is vital and speaks timely message to the hours backed with the authority of the ages.

We dare not underestimate the mportance of the rural man having within himself a deep sense of the presence of His spirit and whose daily life is a life of prayer.

Stewardship

What greater service can we render mankind than for the rural pastors of a united Protestantism to speak out forcibly against the plundering of the land and to remind our people constantly that the land can be destroyed by erosion just as effectively and as tragically as by the wrong use of atomic energy. As one travels this country and sees the destruction wrought in our timberlands, the havoc brought about in some sections through stripmining and the threat to good farming practice, through emphasis upon all-out production, the truth of what Fairfield Osborne describes in his book, "This Plundered Planet," takes on new and tragic meaning.

There is no hope for the new day in rural America and for the rural peoples of the world unless we unite under the banner of the Cross and make the prayer of millions of our rural people the program of the Church Universal—"Thy Kingdom Come."

The 1949 Convocation

• The 1949 National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country will be held at Lincoln, Nebraska, November 8-10, 1949. From time to time announcements will be made in this journal concerning the plans and program.

This is one of the Methodist dinners, held in the First Methodist Church, San Jose, Calif.

—Courtesy of Town and Country Department, Iliff School of Theology

The Rural Church and Land Tenure

From the Commission Report

• The Christian emphasis on the stewardship of all of life is the faith basis of our ideas of land tenure. Land is the basic wealth. It is from God and for the fulfilment of "life abundant" among men. Therefore, how land is held or used involves our basic Christian faith in the Creator and in human destiny or dignity. "The earth is the Lord's" and "all ye are brethren," "members one of another," are words peculiarly relevant to rural life.

The land tenure problems in the western United States differ in many ways from those in other parts of the United States. These problems differ radically from area to area and require consideration and interpretation on a local basis rather than for the region as a whole. Among the major aspects of the tenure problems in the area are the following:

A. The existence of large areas of government-owned land.
B. The importance of size of farm holdings in the economic and community life in the area.
C. The existence of a permanent landless farm labor group.
D. The rights to water for irrigation.
E. The policy of the government in regard to reclamation and development of the land resources.
F. Absentee operatorship as it affects leadership for the local community.

Since land tenure problems are so complex and varied the holding of local institutes to analyze and interpret local tenure problems and policies is desirable. A movement is already under way to hold one-day institutes on land tenure in counties in the United States. This approach seems especially appropriate to meet the problems in this region.

The organization plan for one-day institutes has already been drawn up and is to be found in the Proceedings of the Conference on A Protestant Program for the Family Farm held in Evanston, Illinois, March, 1948. Several such institutes have already been held and people in other counties can profit by their experience.

The organization of such institutes needs to be arranged with special care. Conflicting economic interests, stratification of the population, and existing social cleavages must be kept in mind when programs are drawn so that such cleavages may be reduced rather than widened.

JOSEPH ACKERMAN, *Chairman*
WILLIAM G. METZLER, *Secretary*
WALTER GOLDSCHMIDT
EDGAR WILSON

(*Continued from Page* 8)

(4) The necessity of a more extensive policy of soil conservation; and (5) The importance of an expanded advisory system for the small farmer.

The following questions were raised regarding the implications of these accepted topics: Should American agricultural products be made instruments of power politics in our international affairs? Can we continue to use our land in the present manner and expect to maintain our present type of culture? Can our land, under its present system of use, continue to carry the burden of maintaining itself, fulfilling the needs and desires of people, supporting our domestic institutions, and giving support to foreign countries? How can the small farmer, especially in the south, be guaranteed adequate guidance in farm improvement under the present system of Extension Service in the South? Will the proposal of 160-acre water limitation as stated in the Central Valley California proposal serve the best interest of agriculture, especially in areas which must be irrigated?

The Commission was in agreement that price support in agriculture had served as an important factor in balancing farm income and operation costs. It had also proven valuable in keeping up production in essential products. One of the outstanding contributions of price support has been its incentive effect. It was recognized that price support by government tended in the direction of government control in agriculture.

In the matter of soil conservation it was warned that church groups should be careful lest soil conservation be taken as an institution rather than a service. The need of emphasis on soil conservation has increased with the demands for increase in production.

The problem of the 160-acre water limitations proposal is quite involved. The pivotal point is whether the best interest of all farmers will be served. It is proposed that in irrigated lands, especially in Central Valley, a land owner be limited to 160-acre water supply. Such a proposal is not acceptable to larger land owners. On the other hand, what will be the effect of unlimited supply on relatively small holders? The commission was unable to give necessary consideration to the question. Yet, it concluded that this question presented an outstanding problem which churchmen should study for the best interest of the people.

—Thomas Alfred Tripp

The Church and Migrant Labor

From the Commission Report

• Without question the agricultural migrant problem is a national problem. This commission has concerned itself with the workers—men, women and children representing every racial group. It expressed regret that there has been drastic curtailment of public programs for migrants, particularly housing, health and education. It expressed satisfaction in the pioneering missionary work on a nation-wide scale in which the denominations are now cooperating and which can easily be the springboard for further rural church cooperation.

After thoughtful discussion, the commission presents the following recommendations:

1. That the report and recommendations of the Federal Interagency committee on migrant labor, entitled "Migrant Labor a Human Problem," be given wide-spread study and action.
2. That the books, "As You Sow," by Walter Goldschmidt, and "Tenants of the Almighty," by Arthur L. Raper, be widely used by local churches for study and action. While the former is a study of California communities it has implications for the entire United States.
3. That the safeguards provided to industrial labor such as social security, unemployment insurance, etc., be extended to migrant farm labor.
4. In order that migrants may climb the ladder to ownership of family-size farms, we recommend that the ownership of farm labor camps should remain or be vested in federal or state agencies; that the operation should be by federal, state or legally constituted authority; that the administration should be in cooperation with local advisory committees.
5. In view of increasing demands for information and assistance on migrant and sharecropper projects, we recommend that interdenominational groups at the state and local levels be urged to initiate vigorous programs of interpretation and field service in cooperation with the Home Missions Council.
6. That seminaries and church schools be persuaded that they have an important responsibility for a few selected well-trained leaders to serve migratory people.
7. That volunteer and part-time leadership be recruited and trained in close cooperation with educational agencies.
8. That the pioneering work of the Home Missions Council in migrant and sharecropper fields has demonstrated its worth and therefore merits aggressive support and implementation by the total church.
9. That all agencies concerned with the welfare of migratory laborers be encouraged to coordinate their efforts toward a total constructive solution to the problem of migrancy.

Mrs. F. E. Shotwell, *Chairman*
Miss Mary D. Brown, *Secretary*

Church Cooperation in the Rural Community

From the Commission Report

• The field of this topic is so wide and it has so many ramifications that it has been necessary to limit the discussion to certain areas. After considerable discussion, certain problems emerged:

What cooperative procedures are possible in starting new churches in the community? Contrary to the prevailing opinion that we have enough churches, we declare it to be our conviction that many new

hurches are needed, particularly on he Pacific coast where three million ersons have recently settled as new esidents. The popular demand is for church that unites rather than di- ides the community. Protestant trategy demands that we cooperate visely in establishing these new hurches; failure to do so will be ragic.

The best interests of all denomina- ions working in the community will e served if they recognize the rinciples adopted by state com- nittees and share wholeheartedly in etting up and carrying through in n aggressive manner all comity lans.

Basic principles and techniques of ooperation should be included in he regular training of ministers.

Adjusting the church to the old ommunity. The denominational hurch serving the community must ind some new way for holding mem- ership (affiliate, associate or other imilar plans) so that those of other lenominations may join and still re- ain their convictions regarding mem- ership in their original denomina- ion. All surveys should be made co- peratively or, if made by individual hurches, they should be made with he approval of the comity com- nittee, and the results should be hared by all.

There is a great need for education n the principles and techniques of ooperation in the community.

State comity committees should work with local ministerial groups in helping them to understand the basic principles of interdenomina- ional cooperation.

Local committees composed of ministers and laymen should work ogether in cooperative endeavors. For example, Thanksgiving, Bac- alaureate, and Passion Week serv- ces, surveys, leadership training chools, etc. In some cases, these would be for immediate value whereas in others they would be steps oward complete union.

Some basic principles of cooperation:

There must be mutual recognition of the value and worth of the work of the other churches of the community. The ultimate purpose of the churches is to win every person in the community to God as a father, and Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. This is one task at which churches should work cooperatively, not competitively.

We should recognize our differences of doctrine and church polity, honor each other's convictions but determine to work together just the same. Agreement is not necessary nor is it desirable.

In all cooperative enterprises place a major emphasis upon the great basic central facts of our religion.

Recognize the fact that Christian fellowship across the denominational lines unites, strengthens and leads on to achievement in cooperation.

MARK RICH
C. A. ARMSTRONG

The Agricultural College and the Rural Church

From the Commission Report

• In view of the significant part the agricultural college plays in rural life, its relationship to the rural church deserves careful thought.

The conference and school for Town and Country pastors and church leaders have long been recognized as important cooperative ventures although they may vary in name, time schedule, length, and emphasis. One problem is common, however: Attendance is poor. It is therefore suggested that this in-service training be geared to the needs of ministers and church people rather than to rural leaders in general. Careful consideration should be given to the dates of conferences and schools.

Denominational cooperation and planning are recommended in connection with these conferences. Attendance depends greatly on the cooperation of the state denominational leaders. Personal contact is necessary in this connection. The denominations should be included in the planning of the conferences.

Rural ministers should be aware of the facilities at their service through the extension service of the agricultural college. They should be on the mailing list of the extension service and experiment stations of their state college. They should make themselves known to the extension service men and other professional workers in the agricultural field.

Research should be carried on by the agricultural college on the rural church and its task, trends in rural community and church life, problems, case studies, and the like. New studies of this nature are now needed.

The ministry should be presented to the students in the agricultural college as a significant vocational opportunity, along with other vocations now considered.

Students for the rural ministry should be encouraged to take courses in an agricultural college. Further exploration should be made of the possibilities of theological students who are preparing for the rural ministry and are taking courses in an agricultural college.

State councils of churches should be encouraged to acquaint the rural minister with the facilities and services of the agricultural college which are available to him. Those interested in the welfare of the rural church must use the services of the agricultural college to a greater extent than at present.

PAUL H. LANDIS
C. JAMES MILLER

Evangelism and Church Extension

From the Commission Report

• The commission on Evangelism and Church Extension followed the course as outlined by the National Christian Teaching Mission. The session dealt with four major topics as follows:

Your evangelistic potential: Evangelism as defined means preaching the good news effectively everywhere. The evangelistic potential of the church takes in the whole program of the church. The whole church must have a vital, comprehensive program existing or projected. The church's principal human resource for evangelism is, therefore, the warm, sympathetic fellowship with

which its members can surround those who are not church members. For future reference on this subject we recommend the pamphlet, "Your Evangelistic Potential," an interpretation and discussion outline of the self-study of evangelistic potential, published by the National Christian Teaching Mission, 203 North Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Evangelistic responsibility: A number of people in a given community have a church preference. The pastors of the community need to know the desires of those people concerning churches. A survey of the whole community will give the pastor the information he needs in order to help him know his people and the church he serves. Those who have no church preference will be distributed among the ministers of the community as possible candidates for the church and the cause of Christ. Other methods of surveys can be carried on as the pastor sees fit.

Evangelistic Methods. A manual recommended for this type of evangelism is "A Manual for the Host Pastor and the Guest Leader in the 'Fellowship Evangelism Program' by National Christian Teaching Mission, 203 North Wabash Ave., Chicago 1, Ill."

The purpose of this type of evangelism is to find the lost, educate them to their need of the Christian way of life and present to them an opportunity to make a decision for Christ.

Rural church problems connected with evangelism. Migrants present to the church a real problem and a real challenge. They are people "without a country," no opportunity to develop mentally, spiritually, or physically. The only possible answer to this question is homes, schools, and a decent living wage.

Ross J. Griffeth

Religious Education

From the Commission Report

• We must recognize that the community is a powerful and constant teacher. The community teaches both good and evil. Therefore, there is need of cooperation so that the church may help direct the community to those values which are constructive. Christian education is going on in other agencies. Therefore, the church must join with other character-building agencies of the community to bring about a unified program for positive modification of community life. One church, proceeding with insight and tact, can bring the leaders of the various community agencies together to plan long-range activities for the entire community.

Christian education, to be successful, must be more closely related to rural homes. We must help parents to know what they ought to be teaching and what the church is trying to teach their boys and girls. Home and church must supplement each other.

We wish to express our enthusiasm for new curriculum and resources being provided for the home and the church. We hope more denominations will provide such material. We urge more rural churches to pioneer in the building up of norms, for better Christian homes will mean better rural churches.

The town and country church must develop a program for the training of lay leadership which will guarantee an effective program of Christian growth, even though there may be short-termed ministerial service. This program should include long-range planning with clear-cut objectives geared to personal enrichment, home cultivation and community service. The church must be challenged to recognize its leavening possibilities in total community life and train its members to fulfill this service with the deepest Christian spirit and the most effective techniques.

Materials. In an analytical evaluation of current curriculum developments, there was general agreement on the following:

1. The validity of the underlying philosophy which recognizes the family as the most important unit in Christian education.

2. The urgent necessity for the further development and promotion of those materials, methods and techniques which would provide for closer home and church contacts, acknowledging thereby that Christian education, to be successful, must be so related to the home that parents understand what the church is trying to do for their children.

The Commission also commends the opportunities provided for interdenominational sharing of curriculum developments.

John B. Ketcham

The Rural Pastor as a Counselor

From the Commission Report

• The rural pastor will recognize certain minimum guides in this field:

1. Those who seek his counsel will normally come with a sense, however vague, of the need of a Divine resource to reorder his life and relieve its conflicts.

2. The wise pastor will recognize that his counseling shall not exceed the limits of his preparation.

3. The rural pastor will find opportunity for counseling in wide areas of experience. These will include: a) family relationships in all their ramifications; b) physical handicaps, including old age, which result in adjustment needs; c) misfortunes and experiences which result in a philosophy of fatalism or spirit of resentment; d) guilt feelings that require forgiveness and restitution for their release.

4. The rural minister will use such accepted techniques as will establish rapport, maintain objectivity in the counseling experience and guide the student in that self-examination, evaluation and discovery which will enable him to achieve independent readjustment.

5. He will use the resources of a Christian minister, helping the person establish an adequate Christian idea of God and philosophy of life. He may likewise include the use of prayer, worship, Scripture study and enlistment in the fellowship and service of the church.

6. The rural pastor who secures an opportunity for this ministry must recognize the basic requirements laid upon himself. He must make himself available, for which the maintenance

of a study in the church and the keeping of stated hours is recommended.

We ask for the rural pastor as high a degree of training and as abundant resources as are available for other fields of Christian service.

The rural pastor's major opportunity for effective counseling help will come in the guidance of "normal" life and community programs. The rural pastor, therefore, should understand thoroughly the cultural, economic and historical backgrounds underlying his people together with the trends of change and their effect in unsettling the lives of persons and families. With this understanding he will do well to direct his preaching, visiting and program building, to minister to the needs in their earlier stages.

RALPH K. KOFOED
CLIFFORD KNIGHT
CHARLES A. MCCALMON

The Rural Church and Minority Peoples

From the Commission Report

• The Commission recommends the following forms of action:

I. The rural church should continue to preach the Gospel, constantly seeking a fuller and deeper understanding of the mind of Christ in regard to minority groups and their problems as well as all other personal and social problems.

II. The rural church should combat, first, all forms of segregation within its walls, removing all barriers that would limit broader fellowship with minority groups both now and in the future, yet recognizing the need of various racial groups to the right of church life based on their own spiritual and cultural need, and the contribution they can make to the religious life of the community.

III. The rural church should seek to outlaw all restrictive covenants limiting the freedom of minority peoples to improve their living conditions.

IV. The rural church should seek to establish as many friendly contacts as possible between minority groups and the larger community. The local pastor might spearhead this by taking the lead and inviting members of such groups into his home.

V. The rural church should sponsor specific projects to help meet the needs of minority groups such as: Cooperatives, credit unions, housing, recreation projects, and family life conferences. These and other human needs and problems provide good starting places for the process of conciliation.

VI. The rural church should encourage our national government to make restitution for injustices done to minority groups. For example, the compensation to Japanese for property and business losses in their forced evacuation of the West Coast during World War II; and the immediate payment of funds already adjudicated to the Indians of California for the dispossession of their territory.

VII. The rural church should take every occasion to protect and expand the opportunities for the exercise of the basic human freedoms, for "freedom is necessary for the flowering of personality." We fear the trends of the day marked by the persecution of people who speak out and work for political and economic justice.

The Commission recognises that education is the basic tool by which the treatment of minority peoples will be improved, injustices corrected, and their contribution made to the community. In this task the rural church has a large part, using not only the educational program of the local church, but all the educational resources available. As always, Jesus Christ is the source of our insight and strength, and the standard by which we measure our progress.

EDGAR A. LOVE

Financing the Church in Town and Country

From the Commission Report

• The Commission on Financing the Church in Town and Country briefly reviewed summaries of reports of commissions on this subject which were formulated at previous Convocations on the Church in Town and Country. Some of these prior subjects were, "A Basic Philosophy for Church Finance," "Conditions that Need Rectifying," "Methods of Christian Stewardship," "Fruits of Christian Stewardship."

Our commission this year decided to adopt as its subject, "Generating Inspiration for Christian Stewardship." It was considered to be very worthwhile not only to set forth principles and methods which were proving successful, but also to emphasize and make clear the preparations in prayer and the convictions, enthusiasm and zeal which are held essential to insure the success of the several methods employed.

Statements were made that, in the experience of members of the group, inspiration for Christian stewardship was generated:

1. By setting forth throughout the year, with conviction and warmth of spirit, the Biblical principles of proportionate giving and tithing.

2. By intensively training a canvassing group, encouraging the members themselves to express their convictions concerning the ideals and purposes of the church, and by accompanying preaching messages to develop interest and cooperation for a successful one-day subscription of the budget.

3. By setting forth the several items of the budget in spiritual language: "For the Ministry of enlightenment, power and comfort;" "For the Ministry of music;" "For the care of God's house," etc.

4. By adopting and commending as sound church administration the carefully prepared budget, and the envelope system to aid systematic weekly giving.

5. By adopting and adapting to meet the needs of the local church the Lord's Acre plan, from the Biblical practice of dedicating the first fruits of the field and the firstlings of the herds and the flocks to the Lord—a plan which is usually carried out as a supplementary means of church finance for special improvements or advances in the work of the church.

DUMONT CLARKE

Worship in the Rural Church

From the Commission Report

• The following aims and purposes of an order of worship were discussed. While this order of worship need not be followed, these points were pointed out as important aspects in the worship service:

1. The prelude. The purpose of the prelude is to get the people in an attitude of worship. Music can be used as an atmosphere or as worship in itself. The prelude is, as a rule, an atmosphere, and it would be helpful if the minister could help select the music.

2. The procession. Whenever an entrance is made, it is considered a procession, whether or not there is a processional hymn, and should be made accordingly. If there is a hymn, it should be one of praise and adoration; the words should suggest entering into worship and not moving away from it.

3. Call to worship is actually man speaking to man. For a variation in the call to worship, it was suggested that the congregation might sing the call to worship.

4. Invocation.

5. Hymn. If a hymn is used at this point in the service, it should also be one of adoration and praise. The people should be expressing themselves in praise.

6. Responsive reading, litany, or other reading. This part of the service should be for the purpose of the people joining in asking guidance.

7. If the "Gloria Patri" is sung, it is to praise God after seeking guidance.

8. Reading of Scripture.

9. Hymn. At this point in the service, it should express thanksgiving.

10. Pastoral Prayer. This may also be one of thanksgiving. If there is a choir, it was suggested that an introduction such as "Hear Our Prayer, O Lord" be sung as a preparation for prayer rather than following. The prayer then may be followed by a choral "Amen" or by the Lord's Prayer.

11. Offering. This should be a period of dedication of time, talents, etc., as well as money. This may be followed by a response by the congregation. One suggestion that was made was the possibility of having the offering follow the sermon in order to have the period of dedication at the climax of the service.

12. If desired, a hymn of preparation or anthem may be used before the sermon, but only one or the other should be used—not both.

13. Sermon.

14. Conclusion. A hymn may or may not be used following the sermon. It is sometimes helpful to follow the closing of the sermon with an appropriate hymn. It depends upon the sermon and the attitude conveyed. If there is a choir, it may be necessary to have a recessional hymn. Regardless of whether or not there is a recessional hymn, the choir should leave in order and quietly to avoid spoiling the atmosphere left by the sermon.

15. The Benediction.

MILTON KELLY

The Task of the Town and Village Church

From the Commission Report

• A chief field of attention was the church and its youth. The over-organization of the rural community is often a chief handicap. As a consequence it is necessary to define the function of the church. Worship should be central, but the church must function more than on Sunday morning. Farm people nowadays are thoughtful and educated persons, but there is social stratification among them. Many of the youth may live outside of the village. School activities, especially athletic events, may command a loyalty that the church cannot. Youth goes ten miles for a sandwich after a game, but will it travel as far for church purposes?

Where no recreation is available, the church has a special opportunity; otherwise it will need equipment for religious education and parish sociability, but need not duplicate such facilities as a school gymnasium. Where conflicts of schedule between church and school occur, friendly conference is the best way out.

As the country *town* gets its living from the surrounding people, it has serious *responsibility for the rural area.* Too often people say, "Preacher, don't waste your time out there." This is especially true if the people "out there" are migrant laborers. The church must love all people. In Michigan women workers live among transient farm laborers, and win converts. In Arizona, a city church reaches out to Mexican settlements and invites their attendance. Indians, Mexicans, Chinese, and Anglos can and do worship together.

The migrant laborers tend to settle down. Children will be stable citizens. But the continuing need for transient labor will attract a continuous stream of disadvantaged persons. Sometimes such labor lives in huge camps, sometimes it is scattered widely in small groups. The government, for example, through its obligation to the Mexican government, is sometimes more interested in migrants than are the local church people.

The concluding discussion considered the question: "Is the church important to us?" If so, people will discover it through our enthusiasm. The little church can in some ways be more efficient than the larger one. It should take an interest in its community, rather than seek to exploit it. Laymen find new joy in trying to "sell" the church to its constituents. Effective ministers multiply their leadership many fold through developing such lay leadership.

SUMNER F. WALTERS
ROSS W. SANDERSON

The Church and Rural Community Agencies

From the Commission Report

• I. Why Cooperate? It has been generally assumed that cooperation between the church and other community agencies is a desirable goal. The assumption was critically examined in seeking to answer the above question.

Cooperation is desirable because: (1) It prevents overlapping and duplication of efforts. (2) The overlap-

ing and neglecting of individuals nd group needs is avoided. (3) Economy of leadership, finances and ime will result. (4) There will result a better understanding of the urpose and function of the church n the community when it is discovered that community life is integrated on a higher level. The presnce and active interest of the minister in community agencies as the epresentative of the church will often raise the level of its activities to a higher plane and remind the members of their responsibility to contribute to the making of a finer community life.

I. Who Cooperates? A detailed exploration was made of the possibilties of cooperation between church nd the following agencies as illustrative of how cooperation might be achieved: The home; the school; government agencies; farm organizations; youth agencies.

II. How Cooperate? One of the ways by which the church can cooperate is in the establishment of a community council, whose purpose t would be to continually and cooperatively evaluate community life o discover the needs of the community and to prevent overlapping of efforts and the neglect of certain needs.

The establishment of a community council may be achieved by calling upon experts in the field to hold week-end Rural Life Conferences which may result in the setting up of the council. Again the church may invite other agencies to elect representatives to the council.

A second method of cooperation might be the establishment and maintenance of a calendar of community activities by any interested person or group. It was suggested that there had not yet been developed the most effective technique and methods for community cooperation. Experimentation for the purpose of discovering better methods of cooperation in community life was advocated.

After considerable discussion, need for the church to take the lead in community cooperation became increasingly clear. The church can bring about the integration of community life by accepting its share of responsibility for the task. It was generally agreed that the church should study critically the whole of community life in order to discover unmet needs and, where they are found, to work through already existing organizations for the meeting of these needs, if possible.

ROY STURM

The Theological Seminary and the Rural Church

From the Commission Report

• Questionnaires received from ten seminaries were tabulated. The seminaries offer a total of twenty-six courses which are taught in the rural church department. Field extension work plays an important part in all the seminaries. The extension work is promoted almost exclusively through denominational boards. One seminary, however, is working in close harmony with a nearby college.

In-service training is becoming a large part of the rural church department. A few seminaries reported training schools for lay preachers. The rural department's major emphasis is on church administration and sociology.

The Commission then tried to formulate a statement of the rural church department's distinctive contribution to the theological seminary. The rural department should teach rural sociology and conduct sociological research in the rural community as specifically related to the rural church, and to make practical interpretation and application of this information.

The Commission then submitted the following recommendations:

The rural department should conduct specific experimental group projects and maintain definite personal contact with the official church groups within the project.

A detailed report of all student work should be filed with the rural department each week. This report should receive personal and detailed criticism.

The rural department should maintain contacts with its graduates for at least two years.

The rural department should endeavor to get national leaders and missionaries before the Town and Country church.

The rural department should broaden its thinkng to include the rural situation of the world so that it can adequately meet the needs of the world student who is becoming more commonplace on the seminary campus.

The rural department should seek to encourage the New Testament and Old Testament departments to emphasize the rural aspect of the Bible.

CORRELL JULIAN
H. S. BENSON

Urban-Rural Relations

From the Commission Report

• One commission meeting was devoted to each of the following topics: 1) The inter-relations of rural and city churches; 2) Rurbanization, or the cultural and social interaction of rural and urban communities; and 3) country-city economics. The special lecturer for the second session was Dr. Walter Goldschmidt, author of a special study on industrialized farming in central California.

Industrialized agriculture as a coming phase of rural American life was discussed by Dr. Goldschmidt. He cited evidence taken from central California and beginning to appear elsewhere in our nation. The characteristics of industrialized agriculture are: a) Very intensive agriculture . . . to the last ounce of productivity. b) Mechanized agriculture . . . agricultural factories, on the land. c) High crop investment . . . $100—$200 per acre. d) Speculative quality of the investment . . . not farming as a way of life. e) Crop specialization . . . cotton farmers, potato farmers, etc. f) Little production for home use . . . no cows, few chickens, little garden. g) Large-scale farming inevitably results in industrialized agriculture. h) Credit is

corporate, and these credit sources set the pattern of pay, etc.

In summary, Dr. Goldschmidt stated that not every rurally-placed community or church is rural in culture and thought. What is especially needed for agricultural laborers is a sense of the dignity of work and adequate pay. Perhaps social security and an extension service for farm labor will help. The church, too, must serve these groups.

The basic question we all face is: Where is bread, and how do we get it? The three major groups of country and city . . . agriculture, labor and industry each have the same goal which they call by various names: price, wages and profits. They attempt to reach their goals by similar methods, first by economic organization such as cooperative, labor unions, and corporations, and, secondly, by political organizations. In varying degrees they are successful in these techniques. Too frequently these groups sacrifice the public interest in their attempts to advance their own group interests.

In summary, the church can and should in both country and city: a) Bring together the three major groups for mutual understanding and cooperation. The church has a peculiar responsibility at this point because it is one of the few institutions at home on both sides of rural-urban divisions, and of employer-labor divisions. b) Train boys and girls and adults for Christian leadership in the vocational and political functions of community and national life. The church must train leadership for every walk of life, and see that these leaders are encouraged to accept their Christian task.

Finally, agriculture, labor and industry should be urged not so much to fight for a greater share of a static income of "pie," but to increase the size of the income and then to provide for equitable distribution. Conservation for future generations must also color these attitudes and decisions. Below the level of general church policy and pronouncement is the local church where attitudes are basically altered. It is here that action can take place which will turn our country and city toward Christ. It is here that the doctrine of community of interest between country and city churches can best function.

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Church Work Among Indians

From the Commission Report

• Inasmuch as this marks the first time in the history of the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country when a special commission on "Church Work Among Indians" has been included in the agenda; we, the members of the Fellowship of Indian Workers, wish to express our appreciation for sharing in these sessions and present the following statements and recommendations:

By vote of members of our commission we recommend that the aforesaid commission be continued as a part of the town and country church convocation.

In discussing work among Indians, our commission moved in three areas dealing especially with the worker, the church, and desired goals. Under the first heading we made an analysis of his qualifications, his tools and equipment. Because Indian work is highly specialized we feel that the Indian worker should have a broad background of training supplemented by intensive and continued by regular periods of in-service training. Included in the above we feel that a period of apprenticeship with an experienced missionary would be valuable. While we recognize that the goal for training is full time college and seminary education we realize that such institutions as the Cook Christian Training School at Phoenix, Arizona, fills a specific need in native leadership training at the present time. We recommend to the Board of Directors of Cook Christian Training School that in addition to their present curriculum they develop an interlocking relationship with nearby colleges on an advanced scholastic level.

Feeling the need of releasing certain Indian evangelists and pastors for service in areas where native leaders are scarce we recommend that the Boards supply the finances to make this interchange of workers possible on an interdenominational basis.

It is the judgment of this commission that the mission boards responsible for Indian churches should move toward abolishing race discrimination and segregation wherever it occurs in the missionary program among Indians.

As a first step toward the above we would suggest that adjustments should be made in staff and field service in Indian work on fields ready for it.

We recommend that the national mission boards also seek to get similar adjustments on the levels of state and local community administration.

We believe that we should avoid as far as possible the building up of projects on a distinctive racial basis.

We further suggest that every attempt should be made to get the various race groups integrated in the several conferences and programs that are held, such as the Town and Country Convocation.

We recognize that the foregoing program calls for an educational approach and will take a longer time to achieve with certain groups of Indians than with others, but we suggest that each mission board be encouraged to experiment with some of the above suggestions.

Inasmuch as Indians are moving into the urban centers we suggest that city churches be encouraged to contact such Indians and welcome them into existing churches; and that local pastors and missionaries on Indian fields follow up their relocating Indians and try to get them connected with urban churches.

We urge that missionaries and preachers should make and take every opportunity to speak to white groups on Indian problems and the race feeling.

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